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Historical Commission Minutes 02-05-2002

Arlington Historical Commission
Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday,
5 February 2002
Whittemore-Robbins House, 7:30 PM

Call to Order: Commissioner Pamela Meister chairing this meeting, in Mr. Botterio's absence, with commissioners Eric Stange, Patrick Guthrie, Michael Ruderman; commissioner JoAnn Robinson joined the meeting after the vote on the presentation regarding 35 Bailey Road (below); also secretary Lyz Carey.

Minutes of 5 February 2001: approved.

Communications

This commission has been invited to give a presentation on the topic of public outreach activities at the Fifteenth Annual Leadership Training Conference sponsored by Historic Massachusetts, Inc. April 6 at Becker College in Worcester. Ms. Robinson and Mr. Ruderman will accept for the commission.

Review of Projects

125 Brattle Lane/Farmer's Lane (Colonial Ridge LLC) 11/99: Robinson-no change.
 1167 Mass. Ave. (Mirak) 9/00: Guthrie-no report.
 23 Maple Street (Town of Arlington) 11/00: Robinson, Guthrie-no outdoor activity.
 45 Fairview Avenue (Trvalik) 12/00: Botterio-Mr. Ruderman reported having spoken with the owners, and their likely request for an extension on their project's previously approval.
 19 Winter Street (McGlashing) 2/01: Ruderman-no change.
 9 Brantwood Road (Stainton) 5/01: Botterio-no report.
 34 Gray Street (Carr) 11/01: Stange-garage has been removed.
 30 Academy Street [f. 20 Pelham Terrace] (McKee) 11/01: Robinson-continuing to monitor and advise on changes to the approved plans.
 24 Gray Street (V. Brown, W. Stewart) 12/01: Stange-work continues on plan.

Demolitions Pending

7 Brattle Court (Freedom Development): August 1, 2001
5 Brattle Court (Freedom Development): November 8, 2001
962 Massachusetts Avenue (Rita Yegian, owner): November 8, 2001
 No information received on any of these properties.

Reports

Whittemore-Robbins House (and outbuildings): Carey
 Arlington Civic Block Garden: Robinson
 Jarvis House (50 Pleasant Street):
 Updates and Expansion to Inventory: Meister, Guthrie, Stange
 Inventory of public buildings: Stange and Robinson
 Education/Outreach: Stange, Botterio-discussion of the April 6 presentation in Worcester.
 Zoning By-Law Review Committee: Meister-see new business below.
 Historic Districts Commission:
 Old Burying Ground survey and assessment-Robinson
 Preservation Fund-Guthrie
 March 2002 Event: "Murder at Harvard" broadcast-Mr Stange to discuss April fundraiser date with Regent Theater.

New Business

7:45 pm: Informative presentation: 32 Draper Avenue (Robert Kingston and Rhonda Feinbaum, owners): Mr. Kingston appeared, with Mr. James MacPhee of Black River Architects (1640 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge), to discuss with the commission the changes they contemplate making. Commissioners, and neighboring owner Mr. Greg Blass, reviewed the photographs, plans and elevations of the work, and considered the historical and architectural precedents for this structure. The matter will come before the commission at the next meeting as a formal hearing, to begin at 8:00 pm.

8:00 pm: Formal Hearing: 35 Bailey Road (Stephen Weil, owner): Mr. Weil, and the same Mr. MacPhee as above, presented their plans for renovations to the 1870 Henry J. Locke house, portions of which may have built as early as 1815, the majority of the structure (minus 15 feet of a rear ell, which would not fit on this house lot) moved to this address in April 1927. They intend to demolish a portion of a dilapidated rear porch, and add a rear ell parallel to and adjoining the existing one. The commission found Mr. Weil's plans and sketches very sympathetic to the existing style of the home, incorporating many of the present design elements. The commission also commends the architect's plans to recycle slate roofing tiles from the old roof to the new. On Mr. Stange's motion, and Ms. Meister's second, the commission unanimously approved the plans as presented for the work, which Mr. Guthrie will monitor.

8:30 pm: By-Law Review update: Mr. Freeland "Chick" Abbott, chair of the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee, discussed the genesis and the draft text of the changes his committee will propose to section 11.06 of the Arlington Zoning Bylaw at the upcoming Town Meeting. These changes would create a new designation of "special places" which, by their historical and architectural significance to Arlington and to the nation, would trigger the provisions of Environmental Design Review presently in the bylaw.

Outside of Arlington's seven historic districts, nothing protects the surroundings of historic structures from deleterious building and development.

The areas to be proposed as "special places," including 200-foot surrounds, are the Old Schwamb Mill (17 Mill Lane), the Jason Russell House (7 Jason Street), the Park Circle Water Tower, the Central Fire Station (Massachusetts Avenue, Franklin Street, and Broadway), St. Athanasius the Great Greek Orthodox Church (735 Massachusetts Avenue), and the Butterfield-Whittemore House (54 Massachusetts Avenue).

In order to be included in the warrant for town meeting, the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee had to submit their articles (one, to add the category of "special places" and the review mechanism to Section 11.06, and the second, to nominate the six addresses above as special places) ahead of their being endorsed by the Redevelopment Board. Mr. Abbott asked for, and received, this committee's unanimous endorsement of the concept of "special places."

There being no other new business, we confirmed the date of the next meeting for March 5, 2002, starting at 7:30 at this location, and this meeting close.

For the Arlington Historical Commission,
A. Michael Ruderman, Commissioner